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ABSTRACT

In 1999, Fairmont State College (FSC) received a U.S. Department of Education grant to implement Project GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) in nine primarily-rural counties of West Virginia. GEAR UP encourages disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, stay in school, and take academically rigorous courses to prepare for college. Each year, incoming seventh-grade students and their parents are surveyed about their perceptions of and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. This report summarizes findings from the third administration of the surveys, in September 2001 at 29 middle schools in the region. Usable surveys were returned by 2,213 students, 1,921 mothers, and 1,300 fathers. Overall, students and parents had positive views of students' academic abilities and the effort they put into their studies. Despite parents' satisfaction with the amount of family involvement encouraged by the school, their participation in school-based activities seemed limited in scope. While students reported feeling fairly confident and successful about learning, they did not view their learning as particularly interesting or exciting, did not have opportunity for exploration, and did not feel that teachers valued their thoughts or feelings. Students' and parents' aspirations were high for students' postsecondary education. Students viewed parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices. Very few students and parents had a realistic idea of tuition costs. Appendix contains survey questionnaires with summaries of item responses. (SV)

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Fairmont State College GEAR UP Project:

Year 3 Baseline Survey (2001-2002)

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

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Fairmont State College
GEAR UP Project:

Year 3 Baseline Survey (2001-2002)

April 2002

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education funded 21 state and 164 college and middle school partnership grants for Project GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). These grants focused on encouraging disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, stay in school, and take academically rigorous courses to prepare them for college. Fairmont State College (FSC) received the fourth largest grant nationwide and was the only West Virginia recipient.

FSC's partnership grant includes early intervention, partnership, and scholarship components for its mostly rural constituents in north central West Virginia. Collaborating agencies include nine county boards of education (Barbour, Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, and Tucker) and a number of state, business, and organizational partners. The grant initially funds academic and support services for seventh-grade students and their parents and follows those students through the following four years. In addition, a new pool of seventh graders is added each successive year. Typical activities include tutoring, mentoring and counseling, after-school and weekend activities, summer camps, financial planning and college awareness sessions for parents, educational classes for parents, curriculum guides, staff development and training, support equipment and motivational materials, and internships.

As part of its GEAR UP grant, FSC contracted with AEL to administer and analyze surveys to gather baseline information on incoming seventh-grade students' and parents' awareness and perceptions of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. This report summarizes findings from the third administration of the surveys in September 2001 at 29 middle schools within the nine-county region. The main objectives are to analyze and summarize regional GEAR UP baseline survey data.

Two surveys were used for data collection—one for students and one for parents (one copy for mothers and one copy for fathers). The two separate student surveys used last year were merged into one comprehensive survey. Both the parent and student surveys were converted to a format compatible for scanning and, based on data from the second-year administration, several item stems and response options were clarified. The student survey contained 90 selected-response items and the parent survey contained 30 selected-response items, with various response options. To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct (internal consistency), Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for this set of respondent scores: the student survey coefficient was .91; the parent survey coefficient was .75 for mothers and .77 for fathers.

In July 2001, AEL staff photocopied the final surveys and assembled student packets (containing a cover page, a student survey, and two copies of the parent survey) to be distributed to school staff. An AEL staff member drove the materials to Flatwoods, West Virginia, where they were picked up by an FSC staff member. Each participating school received an appropriate number of student packets, as well as envelopes for returning the completed surveys to AEL. The total number of seventh-grade students at the participating schools was 2,672.

Teachers were instructed to complete the demographic cover page, transfer the corresponding identification number to all three surveys, and then remove the cover page before distributing the packets to students. The cover pages were to be collected and sent to FSC staff. Students were given time during a class period to complete their survey and were instructed to take the parent surveys home for their parents to complete and then return them to their teacher. After all surveys for a school were completed and returned, a staff member packaged the materials in the envelopes provided and mailed them to AEL.

While no specific deadline was given for returning the completed surveys, school staff were urged to administer them as soon as feasible so that planning for GEAR UP activities could be finalized and project implementation could begin. Of the 29 participating schools, 7 returned their surveys in September, 15 in October, 5 in November, 1 in December, and 1 in February.

Response rates varied by type of survey. A total of 2,213 usable student surveys were received (83% return rate). Parental participation rates are estimates only, based on the assumption that each student has both a male and female parent or guardian: 1,921 mother surveys were received (72% return rate) and 1,300 father surveys were received (49% return rate). These return rates are all lower than last year's, which were 93%, 83%, and 64%, respectively.

In order to provide timely data to FSC staff for finalizing GEAR UP activities, data analyses and summarization were completed in March 2002. School-specific, county-specific, and regional summaries were prepared on survey facsimiles, with response percentages printed in red ink to aid readability. In April, the following materials were transmitted to FSC staff: a complete set of the school, county, and regional summaries for FSC use; county-specific summaries for sharing with the nine county GEAR UP coordinators; and school-specific summaries for sharing with principals from the 29 participating schools.

Findings are presented for the regional overview by type of survey and include narrative text, a table, and 18 figures. Some of the key conclusions and recommendations follow.

Conclusions

- Overall, students seem to have a positive view of their academic abilities and of the effort they put into their studies. More than three fourths view themselves as good or excellent students. Further, nearly two thirds believe they work as hard as other students and about a third report that they work harder or much harder. Parents have a similar perception of the effort their child puts into education. About a third perceive that their child works harder or much harder than other children and about half believe their child works about the same; three fourths believe that their child is either an excellent or good student.

- Despite parents' satisfaction with the amount of family involvement encouraged by the school, their participation in school-based activities seems to be limited in scope. About two thirds of the mothers and half of the fathers report that they occasionally or frequently meet with their child's teachers. However, nearly 30% of the fathers report never meeting with a teacher,

compared to only 10% of the mothers. About three fourths of the mothers and the fathers report they occasionally or frequently attend activities at their child's school.

- Students report being well supported in the areas of confidence to take action, sense of accomplishment, and heroes. They report feeling less well supported in fun and excitement, belonging, and curiosity and creativity. In other words, while students report feeling fairly confident and successful about learning, they do not seem to view their learning as particularly interesting or exciting, do not feel that they are given the opportunity for exploration, and do not feel that teachers particularly value their thoughts or feelings.

- Overall, student and parent aspirations are high for the student's postsecondary education. Almost two thirds of the students believe that they will obtain either a bachelor or graduate degree and about three fourths believe their parents want them to get a bachelor or graduate degree. Similarly, about three fourths of the parents report wanting their child to obtain either degree.

- Students view parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices and most value their input to educational decision making. However, only about a third of the parents are familiar with college entrance requirements and believe they have enough information on high school graduation requirements.

- Very few of the students and parents seem to have a realistic estimate of the tuition expense for one year at a four-year in-state public college. Only 20% of both groups selected the expense range that included the state and national average tuition expenses ($2,548 and $3,506 respectively).

Recommendations

- Encourage student participation in tutoring and mentoring programs, especially in math.

- Emphasize the importance of college-preparatory courses and encourage students to plan on taking such courses, especially physics, calculus, and trigonometry.

- Provide students and parents with information about and entrance requirements for both two- and four-year colleges, as well as for vocational and business schools.

- Provide students and parents with information about and requirements for various financial aid sources for financing postsecondary education.

- Work to find ways to increase parents' involvement in the academic lives of their children, beyond occasionally meeting with teachers or attending school activities.

- Work to find ways to make learning more interesting and exciting for students, and provide more opportunities for individual exploration and investigation.

- Work to find ways of increasing students' sense of belonging in the school community.

INTRODUCTION

GEAR UP Description

In August 1999, President Clinton announced $120 million in GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grants to 21 states and 164 partnerships of colleges and middle schools across the country (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999). These U.S. Department of Education-funded grants were to encourage disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, to stay in school, and to take academically rigorous courses to prepare them for college. GEAR UP differs from other federal programs in that it

- begins no later than the seventh grade to help ensure that students take appropriate college preparatory courses and follows them through high school
- transforms schools by working with entire grades of students (cohort or whole-grade approach) to provide a comprehensive array of services including mentoring, tutoring, counseling, strengthening the curriculum, professional development for teachers and staff, parent involvement, after-school programs, summer academic and enrichment programs, and college visits
- leverages local resources by encouraging colleges to partner with low-income middle schools and leverages nonfederal resources with a 1-for-1 match requirement
- provides college scholarships and 21st Century Scholar Certificates (early notification of students' eligibility for financial aid)
- bolsters state efforts by supporting early college preparation programs (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999)

Fairmont State College (FSC) received the fourth largest grant nationwide for 1999-2000 and was the only West Virginia recipient. Grant criteria included a demonstrated need for funding as reflected by poverty levels, gross income levels, college-going rates, and academic preparedness; critical components of early intervention efforts, activities to promote college preparation, and parent involvement; and a demonstrated commitment of partners (FSC, 1999).

Fairmont State College GEAR UP Grant

The FSC partnership grant aims to promote the academic advancement of higher education among youth by increasing their interest in and academic preparation for college. Specific purposes include giving more low-income students the skills, encouragement, and preparation needed to pursue a postsecondary education; contributing to the reform and improvement of schools; increasing the number of low-income students who are prepared to go to college and succeed; strengthening academic programs and student services at participating schools; building an academic pipeline from

high school to college; developing effective and enduring alliances among schools, colleges, students, parents, government, and community groups; improving teaching and learning; and raising standards of academic achievement for all students (FSC, 1999).

Fairmont's five-year grant includes early intervention, partnership, and scholarship components for its mostly rural constituents in north central West Virginia. Collaborating agencies include nine county boards of education (Barbour, Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, and Tucker) and a number of state, business, and organizational partners. Of the 48 schools within the nine-county region served by the grant, 30 (62%) have a *rural outside MSA* Johnson code, a system used by the National Center for Education Statistics (2002) to assign locale types. Fifteen (31%) of the schools are classified as *small town* and 3 (6%) as *large town* (all in Monongalia County). Further, all 55 of West Virginia's counties have been classified as *Appalachia* by the Appalachian Regional Commission (2000).

The FSC GEAR UP grant initially funds academic and support services for seventh-grade students and their parents in the nine participating counties and follows those students through the following four years. In addition, a new pool of seventh graders is added each successive year. By the end of the five-year funding cycle, the majority of the high school population would have participated in GEAR UP directly or at least benefitted from the overflow effect of having a GEAR UP presence in each middle and high school. At that point, core elements of GEAR UP will have been institutionalized and systemic and environmental changes implemented in all 48 middle and high schools in the nine-county area. Typical activities include but are not limited to

- students (after-school tutoring, mentoring and counseling, after-school and weekend activities, and summer camps)
- parents (financial planning, college awareness, educational classes, and transportation assistance)
- staff (curriculum guides, staff development and training, support equipment and motivational materials, and internships) (FSC, 1999)

Purpose and Objectives of Study

As part of its scope of work in the GEAR UP grant, Fairmont State College contracted with AEL to administer and analyze student and parent surveys to gather baseline information on incoming seventh-grade students' and parents' awareness and perceptions of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. This report summarizes findings from the third administration of the surveys in September 2001 at 29 middle and junior high schools within the nine-county region. (For results of the first and second baseline surveys, see Cowley, 2000 and 2001.) The main objectives are to analyze and summarize regional GEAR UP baseline survey data. The primary audiences are FSC staff and GEAR UP funders. Secondary audiences include West Virginia GEAR UP partners, AEL staff, and others interested in student and parent aspirations.

Review of Literature

Student aspirations extend far beyond individual dreams or ambitions. Aspirations encompass individual and family educational goals, career choices, and self-concept. Quaglia and Perry (1993, p. 2) suggest that aspirations are composed of two components: inspiration and ambitions. "*Ambitions* represents an individual's ability to look ahead and invest in the future. *Inspiration* can be described as the individual's ability to invest the time, energy, and effort presently to reach their ambitions." (For a historical perspective on the aspirations construct, see Quaglia and Cobb's 1996 "Toward a Theory of Student Aspirations," *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*[3], 127-132.)

Researchers at the University of Maine's National Center for Student Aspirations have identified eight conditions that support high levels of aspirations in youth: achievement, belonging, curiosity, empowerment, excitement, mentoring, risk taking, and self-confidence (Plucker & Quaglia, 1998). The authors state that these conditions "provide an interpretive template that frames how students can be viewed and how schools can positively support . . . the development of student aspirations" (p. 253). Further research at the University's College of Education and Human Development resulted in modifications to the eight factors related to student aspirations. These eight conditions, which "emphasize the importance of putting the students at the center of any school initiative or program" (University of Maine, 1999a, p. 1), include

- **Belonging:** A relationship between two or more individuals characterized by a sense of connection, support, and community
- **Heroes:** People whom children admire and imitate because of their personal talents
- **Sense of Accomplishment:** In addition to academic success, recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as important signs of children's success
- **Fun and Excitement:** Involves being interested in something, being emotionally involved, or having an intense experience or desire of some kind
- **Spirit of Adventure:** Characterized as a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges
- **Curiosity and Creativity:** Characterized as inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries
- **Leadership and Responsibility:** Children's sense of control and responsibility for their actions and words
- **Confidence to Take Action:** The extent to which children believe in themselves and is related to self-regard, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect

Adolescence is characterized by emotional, physical, cognitive, and social transformations. As patterns of thoughts or choices emerge, youth begin to gain a picture of "who they are," which is essential for school to have meaning and purpose. Schools can help facilitate that transformation

by providing an environment conducive for students to learn how to usefully and productively manage their time, energy, and efforts in ways that are meaningful to them for the future and yet enjoyable to them in the present (Quaglia & Perry, 1993). Educators can try to influence aspirations with inspiration, realism, and respect (Sizer, 1996). Schools can achieve this, according to Sizer, by attracting "interesting" staff with aspirations of their own, keeping schools small to allow more than casual interactions, making time for students to pursue interests, providing "aspirer" models from the community, and being flexible. He encourages, "Expect every youngster to have a worthy passion of some sort. Work at it, make it a priority, speak about it, make exceptions for it" (p. 126). Quaglia and Cobb (1996) state that youth are pressured toward uniformity by social groups and suggest that schools combat this mind-set by fostering an environment that encourages diversity, excellence, and risk taking among students.

Cobb, McIntire, and Pratt (as cited in Quaglia & Perry, 1993) report that rural youth believe that their parents are more supportive of them taking full-time jobs, attending vocational schools, or joining the military than going to college. In addition, Walberg and Greenberg (1996) note that rural youth also face economic decline, limited work opportunities, and increased isolation. Yet youth are a rural community's greatest asset. When youth migrate from their hometowns, rural communities suffer a loss of talent and vitality crucial to the development or maintenance of a desirable future for these communities (Ley, Nelson, & Beltyukova, 1996). Factors affecting out-migration include limited economic opportunities, lack of faith in a community to sustain favorable economic conditions, and a willingness of rural youth to look elsewhere for opportunities. All of these, combined with overall lower aspirations for postsecondary education, make it more difficult for rural youth to achieve career and economic success within West Virginia.

Howley, Harmon, and Leopold (1996) note that educators and community leaders believe that rural youth are becoming less involved in their hometown communities—which may reinforce students' inclination to migrate elsewhere. To encourage rural youth to remain active participants in their local communities, community members and schools must encourage and facilitate the development of rural students' aspirations and, at the same time, transform local communities into appealing places where young adults can prosper and grow while contributing to the quality of rural life.

According to Kampits (1996), rural youth have significantly higher graduation rates from high school than urban youth, yet they are less likely to pursue college degrees and are less likely to graduate from high school with firm plans for the future. In addition, low-income youth are less likely than more affluent youth to enroll in more demanding college-preparatory courses. She challenges educators to focus on the needs of the students:

> Regardless of high expectations—even regulations—that students will learn and demonstrate specific knowledge and understanding, first they must want to learn, be inspired to learn, and understand why they should learn. In short, they must be full partners, not just subjects, in the learning process (Kampits, 1996, p. 176).

METHODS

Instrumentation

In July 2001, AEL staff revised the student and parent surveys. There were three major components of these revisions. First, the two student surveys (one developed by AEL and FSC staff; the other provided by the U.S. Department of Education) were merged into one comprehensive survey that eliminated duplicate items and grouped the remaining items by topic. Second, both the parent and student surveys were converted to a format compatible for an optical mark reader and scanning software program. Third, several item stems and response options were clarified based on data obtained from the second-year surveys.

Student survey. This survey contained 90 selected-response items utilizing a variety of response options. Students were asked about their school work, knowledge about college, plans for the future, background, and aspirations. Similar to last year, 28 items from the University of Maine's *Students Speak* survey were included to capture data on the eight components related to aspirations (belonging, heroes, sense of accomplishment, fun and excitement, spirit of adventure, curiosity and creativity, leadership and responsibility, and confidence to take action) (University of Maine, 1999a). Further, based on a recommendation from last year's report, AEL staff developed 5 additional items to include in the adventure (2) and leadership (3) components in an attempt to strengthen their reliability. Students were asked to rate their level of agreement on a 1 to 5 scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) for these 33 items, along with 10 others. For analysis purposes, the eight components formed eight separate subscales (see Table 1 for a listing of the items that comprise each subscale). Since each subscale had a different number of items, item-level subscale means (total subscale score divided by number of items in the subscale) were used to enable cross-subscale comparisons.

To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct (internal consistency), Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for this set of respondent scores for the region (using interval and ordinal items, excluding demographic items). At .94, the coefficient was deemed to be very satisfactory for this type of instrument. At the subscale level, the coefficients ranged from .64 to .78 and were similar to those obtained by the University of Maine researchers (1999b) and to those obtained last year. The additional items for adventure and leadership did seem to increase the reliability of these subscales. See Table 1 for subscale reliability coefficients.

Parent survey. This survey, drafted by the U.S. Department of Education and modified by AEL staff, contained 30 selected-response items utilizing a variety of response options. Parents were asked to respond to items about their child, their child's future plans, their knowledge about college, and their background. To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct, Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for both mother and father respondent scores for the region (using interval and ordinal items, excluding demographic items). For the mother scores, the coefficient was deemed satisfactory for this type of instrument at .75, identical to the coefficient for last year. The coefficient for the father scores also remained the same at .77.

Table 1: Aspirations Subscale Items and Alpha Reliability Coefficients

Subscale and Coefficient	AEL Coeff.*	UoM Coeff.*	Items
Belonging	.78	.80	65. Teachers care about my problems and feelings. 66. Teachers respect my thoughts. 74. Teachers value my opinions. 76. I am proud of my school.
Heroes	.69	.66	64. I am a positive role model to other students. 68. I have a strong caring relationship with an adult. 71. Teachers expect me to succeed. 77. Teachers help me to succeed. 84. I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.
Sense of Accomplishment	.72	.68	69. Teachers care about my success in class. 70. I believe I can always improve. 78. I put forth the necessary effort to reach a goal. 81. Teachers tell me I do a good job when I try my best.
Fun and Excitement	.70	.70	63. I usually have fun in class. 83. Teachers make learning exciting. 86. I am not usually bored in school.
Spirit of Adventure	.65	.59	59. I know what I want and I go after it.** 61. I can select the best way to solve a problem.** 79. Teachers support me when I try something new. 82. I am eager to learn new things. 89. I have opportunities to decide for myself what I learn about in school.
Curiosity and Creativity	.67	.57	67. I seek solutions to complex problems. 80. My courses help me to understand what is happening in my everyday life. 85. Teachers allow me to explore topics I find interesting. 90. Teachers encourage me to ask questions.
Leadership and Responsibility	.65	.44	58. I can take control of situations.** 60. I am a good leader.** 62. I do what I say I will.** 75. I accept responsibility for my actions. 87. Teachers expect me to be a good decision maker.
Confidence to Take Action	.64	.56	72. I am confident in my ability to do well. 73. I take action on causes I believe in. 88. Anyone can succeed if they work hard enough.

*"AEL Coeff." pertains to findings from the research described in this report; "UoM Coeff." pertains to previous University of Maine research.
**Additional items developed by AEL staff.

Coding sheet. To keep respondents' identity anonymous in the analysis phase, students were assigned a unique code number. Coding was done at the school level, usually by the teachers. A Student Demographic Cover Page was completed for each student and included information about the student and parents. Identification codes included the student's Social Security, a two-digit county code, and a two-digit school code. By including these codes on all surveys, it is possible to compare an individual's responses across surveys throughout the five-year period, as well as link parent and student responses.

Data Collection

The two surveys described above were utilized to gather baseline data from seventh-grade students and their parents from the 29 middle and junior high schools in the nine-county area. The 2001-2002 seventh-grade population for these schools was 2,672. In August 2001, AEL staff photocopied the final surveys and assembled student packets to be distributed to school staff. Each packet contained a one-page demographic cover page printed on green paper, a seven-page student survey printed on ivory paper, and two copies of the two-page (front/back) parent survey printed on white paper (one copy for mothers and one copy for fathers). Each participating school received an appropriate number of student packets, as well as envelopes for returning the completed surveys to AEL. An AEL staff member delivered the boxed materials to Flatwoods, West Virginia, the first week of August, where they were picked up by an FSC staff member.

Teachers were instructed to complete the demographic cover page, transfer the corresponding identification number to all three surveys, and then remove the cover page before distributing the packets to students. The cover pages were to be collected and sent to FSC staff. Students were given time during a class period to complete their survey and were instructed to take the parent surveys home for their parents to complete and then return them to their teacher. After all surveys for a school were completed and returned, a staff member packaged the materials in the envelopes provided and mailed them to AEL.

While no specific deadline was given for returning the completed surveys, school staff were urged to administer them as soon as feasible so that planning for GEAR UP activities could be finalized and project implementation could begin. Of the 29 participating schools, 7 returned their surveys in September, 15 in October, 5 in November, 1 in December, and 1 in February. See Appendix A for a completed SEDCAR Standards Checklist, which documents the data collection methods used in this project (Cooperative Education Data Collection and Reporting [CEDCAR] Standards Project Task Force, 1991).

Data Analyses

In order to scan completed surveys, templates were created using Remark software. As data were being scanned and saved in Remark, spot-checks were completed by staff to ensure scanning accuracy. Further, item response analyses were generated to aid staff in verifying the data files, which were remarkably clean. In January and February 2002, data were scanned by school into student and parent databases and stored both on hard drive and taped backup. Once school analyses were completed, these files were exported to the SPSS statistical analysis software program and merged into county-specific files so that these analyses could be conducted. Finally, the county files were merged into one master file to prepare a regional analysis by survey. The eight student aspirations subscales were created in SPSS, as well.

Response rates varied by survey. A total of 2,213 student surveys were received (83% return rate). As expected, parent participation was lower. A total of 1,921 surveys were received from students' mothers (72% return rate, if one assumes that all students have either a mother or some female guardian such as grandmother or stepmother, which is not ascertainable). A total of 1,300 surveys were received from students' fathers (49% return rate, making the same assumption about male care givers). Therefore, response rates for parents should be viewed only as estimates of the population. The return rates all decreased from last year, which were 93%, 83%, and 64%, respectively. See Table 2 for a breakdown of respondents by county and survey.

In order to provide timely data to FSC staff for finalizing GEAR UP activities, data analyses and summarization were completed in March 2002. School-specific, county-specific, and regional summaries were prepared on survey facsimiles, with response percentages printed in red ink to aid readability. In April, the following materials were transmitted to FSC staff: a complete set of the school, county, and regional summaries for FSC use; county-specific summaries for sharing with the county coordinators; and school-specific summaries for sharing with the principals from the participating schools. See Appendix B for a copy of the regional summary by survey.

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Table 2: Number of Respondents by County and Survey

County	Student Survey	Parent Survey (Mothers)	Parent Survey (Fathers)
Barbour	196	184	107
Doddridge	88	65	48
Harrison	492	468	313
Marion	419	321	207
Monongalia	205	185	140
Preston	318	295	215
Randolph	277	195	132
Taylor	145	142	79
Tucker	73	66	59
TOTAL	2,213	1,921	1,300

FINDINGS

This section presents findings from the administration of GEAR UP surveys to seventh-grade students and their parents in the participating schools within the FSC region. Findings are presented by type of survey.

Student Survey

A total of 2,213 students responded to this survey. However due to missing data (skipped items), the number of respondents changes from item to item and is not reported. Fifty-two percent of the students were female, and the majority (74%) were 12 years old. Nearly all the students said they were White (90%), 3% said American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% said African American, and 3% said biracial or multiracial. Less than half of the students (40%) said that they had one brother, 32% said that they had no brothers, and 17% indicated that they had two brothers. Likewise, 40% reported having one sister, followed by no sister (34%), and two sisters (18%). Thirty-eight percent of the students reported that four people live in their home, followed by 24% with five members, 19% with three, and 9% with six.

Students were asked who usually helps them with their homework. The most common response was parent or guardian (88%), followed by friend (27%), brother or sister (24%), teacher (22%), grandparent (15%), and some other family member (13%). Students were then asked how hard they worked in school compared with other students. Sixty percent said they worked as hard as other students and nearly a third (30%) said they worked harder or much harder (see Figure 1 for further details). When asked what type of student they considered themselves to be, two thirds (67%) reported that they were good students, 16% said fair, and 15% said excellent (see Figure 2 for further details).

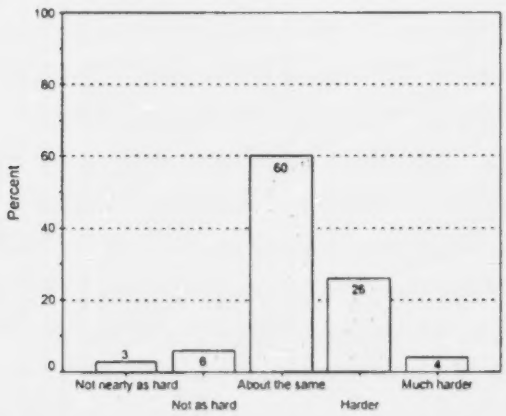

Figure 1: Students' Perceptions of How Hard They Work in School Compared to Other Students

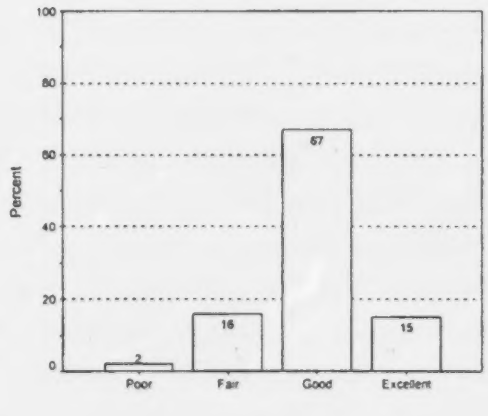

Figure 2: Students' Perceptions of Themselves as Students

When asked how important it was to them what people thought they should do about their education, nearly all students reported that a parent was very important (92%). This was followed by teacher (76%), grandparent (66%), and principal (61%). Thirty-eight percent of the students said other (unidentified) people were not important, followed by religious leader (27%), sibling (25%), and coach (22%) (see Figure 3 for a graphical portrayal of whom students thought were very important in helping them make decisions).

When asked how they were doing in certain subjects, students' responses were very similar across all subjects: 82% responded that they were doing well in English, 80% in science, 75% in math, and 73% in history. For students who indicated that they were not doing well, their most frequent explanations were fairly similar for English, history, math, and science: have a C or D (16%, 16%, 21%, 15%, respectively); subject is boring (15%, 20%, 13%, 12%, respectively); don't do well on tests (13%, 18%, 19%, 19%, respectively); and don't like the subject (12%, 15%, 15%, 12%, respectively). When students were asked which subjects they needed help with, 38% indicated math, 26% science, 23% social studies, and 22% English (see Figure 4 for further details).

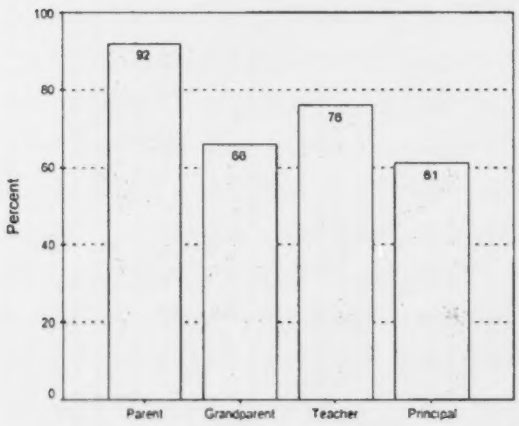

Figure 3: People Who Are Important to Students in Terms of Educational Advice

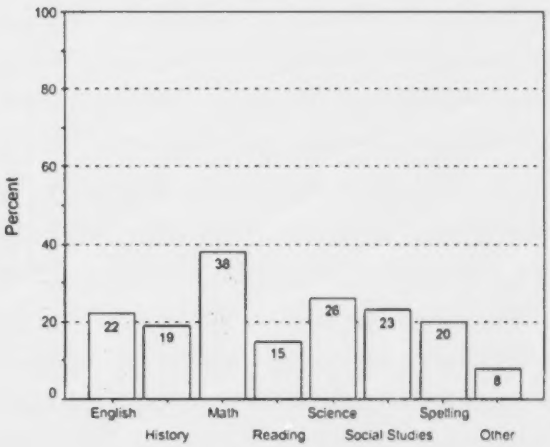

Figure 4: Students' Perceptions of Classes in Which They Need Help

When asked what was their favorite subject in school, 18% of the students indicated math, followed by art (12%) and science (11%). Students were then asked what made that subject their favorite. More than half (54%) of the students indicated that they were good at it, 48% indicated that it was fun or cool, 43% said that it was easy to understand, 42% each indicated that they liked the teacher or the subject, 38% said that they liked the activities, and 23% indicated it was challenging.

When asked which courses they planned on taking in high school, more than half of the students (62%) selected a foreign language. About half selected algebra (51%) or chemistry (48%). About a fourth (26%) selected physics and only 18% each selected calculus and trigonometry.

Students were asked how many hours they spent on homework for specific subjects. About half indicated that they spent a half hour each for English (63%), history (54%) science (52%), math (50%), and all other subjects combined (32%). Between 14% and 26% indicated they spent an hour per day for these subjects, and between 9% and 20% indicated that they did not have homework in these subjects.

Ninety percent of the students thought that they had the ability to go to college and 73% said that they had good study skills. While 65% said that they would be interested in having a "college-type" mentor or buddy, only 35% indicated that they would be interested in attending an after-school tutoring program. More than half (54%) said that they plan to live in West Virginia when they are 30 and 52% indicated that they plan to be working in West Virginia when they are 30.

Nearly two thirds of the students indicated that they participated in sports (62%), followed by clubs (39%) and student government (18%). Regarding technology, more than three fourths (78%) said they had used a computer for school projects or used a computer at home (77%); most of these home computers had Internet access (60%). Nearly two thirds of the students (61%) indicated they had taken a computer class at school.

Six items related to students' knowledge about college. When asked if they had talked to their school counselor or someone else at their school about the entrance requirements for college, 79% indicated that they had not. More than half (55%) indicated that they had an idea of what courses they should take in high school to prepare them for college. When asked if they had heard of various types of postsecondary schools, 81% indicated that they were aware of a four-year college or university; 60% said that they had heard of a vocational, trade, or business school; and 57% said that they had heard of a two-year community college. Eighty-six percent responded positively when asked if they thought that a person with a college degree typically earns more money in one year than a person without a degree.

When asked how much they thought that one year of tuition cost at a four-year public college in their state, 20% selected $5,001 to $10,000, 19% indicated $1,001 to $5,000, 17% said $10,001 to $15,000, and 14% said $15,001 to $20,000 (see Figure 5 for further details). The actual cost of tuition at a four-year public college in West Virginia is $2,548 and the national average is $3,506 (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001).

Students were then asked how important getting an education beyond high school was to their future. More than three fourths (78%) indicated that it was very important, while 13% said that it was somewhat important, 7% indicated that they didn't know, and 2% said that it was not important.

Students were asked what they wanted to be when they grew up. The most common responses were athlete (7%), veterinarian (6%), doctor (5%), and lawyer or teacher (4% each). Ten percent identified some other occupation not identified on the survey, and 8% didn't know at this point.

Ninety percent of the students indicated that they would continue their education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school, etc.). Eighty-seven percent said that they had heard of GEAR UP before entering the seventh grade.

Students were asked to identify from whom they got most of their information regarding their options for continuing their education after high school. The majority of students (83%) indicated a parent or guardian, followed by teacher (45%), grandparent (33%), other family member (26%), friend (21%), and sibling (21%) (see Figure 6).

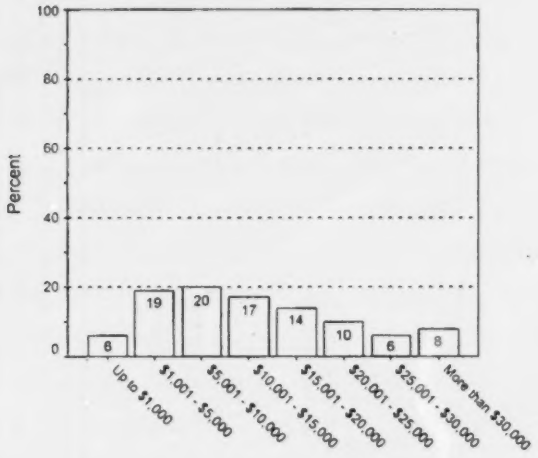

Figure 5: Students' Estimate of Yearly Tuition for an In-State Four-Year Public College

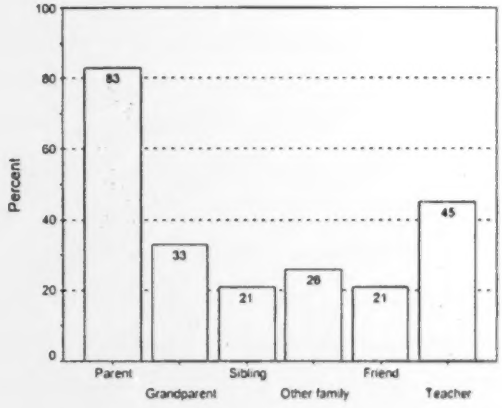

Figure 6: People From Whom Students Get Information on Educational Options

About a third of the students (35%) indicated that they wanted to obtain an advanced degree and 32% indicated a bachelor degree. About half (46%) indicated that their father would like them to further their education to an advanced degree and 27% said a bachelor degree. Similarly the students indicated that 49% of the mothers wanted them to further their education to an advanced degree and 26% to a bachelor degree (see Figure 7 for further details).

Students were then asked to indicate the main reason they would not continue their education after high school. Nearly half (49%) indicated they definitely would go on to college. Thirteen percent of the students didn't know, 9% said it cost too much, and 4% wanted to join the military. When asked if they thought they would be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university, half of the students said they probably or definitely could afford it and 36% said that they were not sure (see Figure 8 for details).

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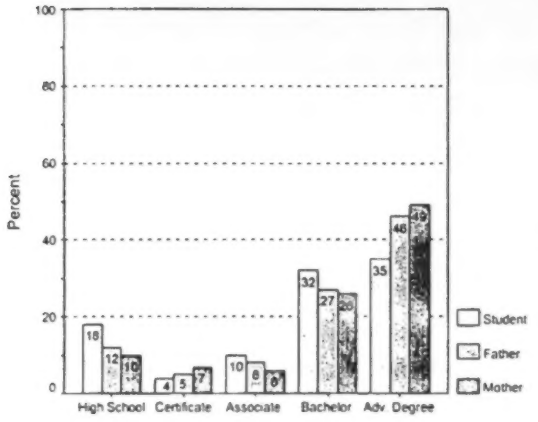

Figure 7: Students' Academic Expectations and Their Perceptions of Their Parents' Expectations

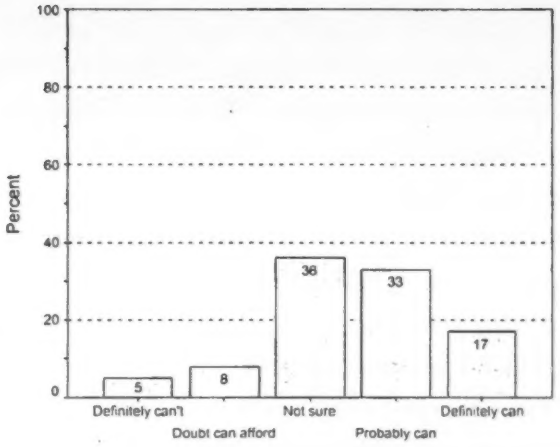

Figure 8: Students' Perceptions of Whether They Can Afford Postsecondary Education

When asked if they had discussed academic requirements for attending a four-year college with any adults in their household, 44% of the students responded that they had. Students were then asked if any of their family members had attended college. Half said their mother had attended, 43% said that a grandparent had attended, 40% indicated a father had attended, and 22% indicated that a brother or sister had attended college.

Students were asked to rate their level of agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) for a series of questions pertaining to post-high school plans. For the following analysis, responses of Agree or Strongly Agree were combined to indicate agreement; responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree were combined to indicate disagreement.

Seventy-five percent agreed that they needed more education or training after high school to obtain a satisfying job; 76% agreed that continuing their education might help them decide what they want to do; 73% agreed that they planned to continue their education after high school, no matter what their career; 52% disagreed that they can obtain a satisfying job without further education; and only 14% agreed that they would not be able to afford to continue their education. Seventy-five percent agreed that they wanted to pursue employment to earn money immediately after high school, 49% agreed that they were anxious to begin their career as soon as possible right after high school, and 44% agreed that getting a job right after high school might help them decide what they want to do. About two thirds of the students (68%) agreed that the opinions of family members would influence their decision making, while 34% agreed that friends helped in this role.

The remaining 33 aspirations items were adapted from the National Center for Student Aspirations from the University of Maine's *Students Speak* survey (28) or developed by AEL (5). These items comprise eight subscales of Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun and Excitement, Spirit of Adventure, Curiosity and Creativity, Leadership and Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action. Again, students were to rate their feelings from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). In order to give an overall sense of agreement, Figure 9 shows the level of agreement (Agree or Strongly Agree) for each of the 33 items grouped by subscale. Students reported most agreement with the beliefs that they can always improve (91%) and that anyone can succeed if they work hard enough (88%). They least agreed that they were positive role models to other students (42%) and that they were usually not bored in school (48%). Although the percentages varied slightly, these items were the same items that students most and least agreed with last year.

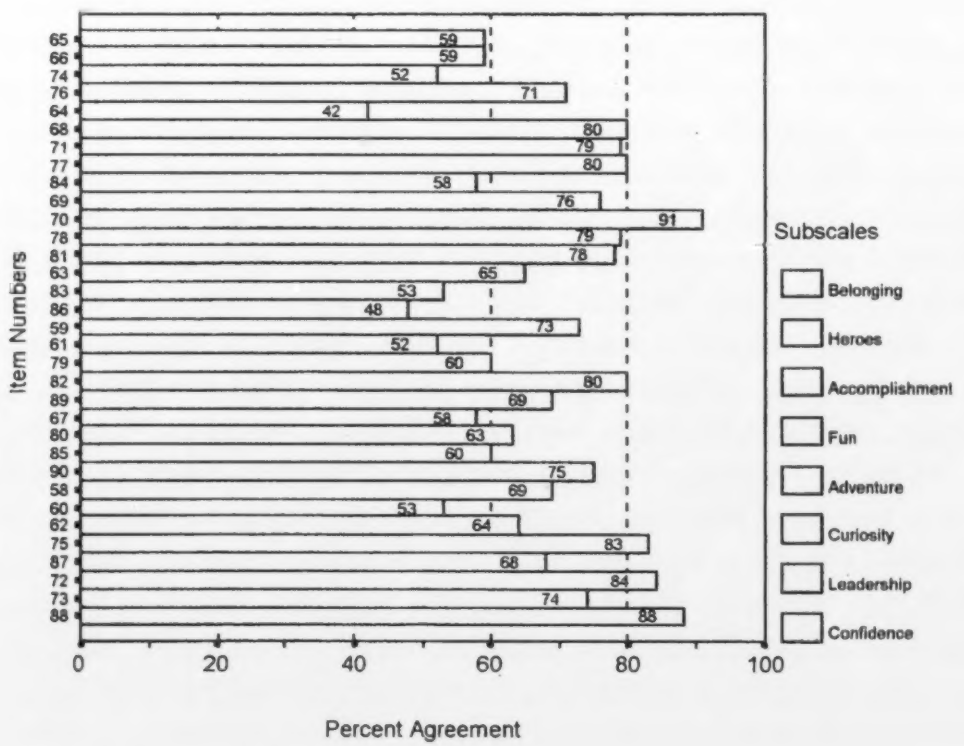

Figure 9: Students' Level of Agreement on Aspirations Subscale Items

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All eight subscales had means ranging within a 1-point spread of 3.37 for the Fun and Excitement subscale to 4.13 for the Confidence to Take Action subscale on the 5-point scale of 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Standard deviations for seven of the subscales were very similar, ranging only from 0.60 to 0.77. However, the Fun and Excitement subscale had a higher standard deviation of 0.91, indicating more variance among respondents' scores for items within that subscale. See Table 3 for descriptive statistics.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Aspirations Subscales

Subscale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belonging	2,157	3.65	0.77
Heroes	2,167	3.83	0.64
Sense of Accomplishment	2,131	4.06	0.65
Fun and Excitement	2,155	3.37	0.91
Spirit of Adventure	2,164	3.77	0.62
Curiosity and Creativity	2,159	3.70	0.69
Leadership/Responsibility	2,166	3.76	0.60
Confidence to Take Action	2,125	4.13	0.63

Parent Survey

A total of 3,265 parents responded to this survey—1,921 mothers and 1,300 fathers. The remaining 44 respondents did not complete either of the two items designed to distinguish between parents (relationship to child and gender); therefore, these 44 surveys were excluded from the following analysis by parent. Further, due to missing data (skipped items), the number of respondents varies from item to item and is not reported. For the mothers' responses, 95% indicated that they were either the mother or female guardian; other responses included step or foster mother and grandmother. For the fathers' responses, 88% indicated that they were either the father or male guardian; other responses included step or foster father, grandfather, friend of child's mother, and other male.

Parents were asked to estimate how many hours each day their child spent on homework for specific subjects; responses from mothers and fathers were very similar. About two thirds of the mothers and fathers estimated their child spent one-half hour per day each for English (70% mothers, 69% fathers), science (65% mothers, 66% fathers), math (63% mothers and fathers), history/social studies (67% mothers and fathers), and all other subjects combined (62% mothers, 61% fathers). Less than 20% of both groups said their child spent no time on English (15% mothers, 16% fathers), science (18% mothers, 17% fathers), math (8% mothers, 7% fathers), history/social studies (13% mothers, 14% fathers), and all other subjects combined (17% mothers, 18% fathers).

Parents were then asked how often each week they helped their child with homework in specific subjects. About half of the mothers and fathers said they occasionally helped their child with English (52% mothers, 53% fathers), science (52% mothers, 57% fathers), math (46% mothers, 52% fathers), history (53% mothers, 57% fathers), and all other subjects combined (57% mothers, 60% fathers). A higher percentage of mothers indicated that they helped their child with homework in these subjects either frequently (about 25% to 15%) or every day (about 15% to 10%); a higher percentage of fathers indicated that they never helped with homework (about 20% to 10%).

Parents' views were very similar on how hard they believed their child works in school. Fifty-two percent of mothers and 51% of fathers indicated that their child worked as hard as other students, and 28% and 32% respectively indicated their child worked harder than other students (see Figure 10 for further details). Also, 51% of both mothers and fathers classified their child as a good student; 27% of the mothers and 29% of the fathers said their child was excellent (see Figure 11 for further details).

Only 14% of the mothers and 13% of the fathers indicated that they had talked with someone at their child's school about the courses or grades needed for high school graduation. Further, only a little more than a third of the parents (34% mothers, 38% fathers) felt they had enough information about high school graduation requirements.

About a third of the mothers (38%) and a fourth of the fathers (28%) indicated they frequently attended activities at their child's school, while almost half (44% mothers, 42% fathers) indicated they occasionally attended. Eighteen percent of the mothers reported they seldom or never attended such activities, compared to 29% of the fathers.

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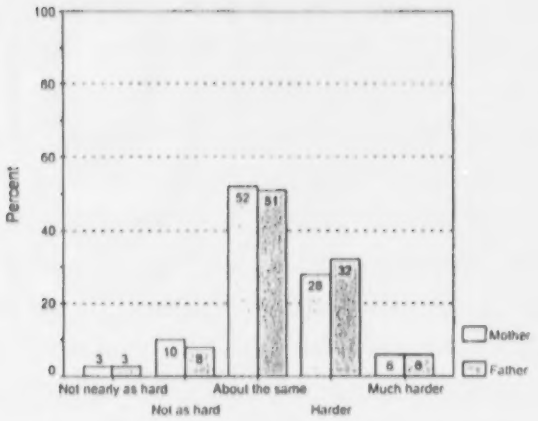

Figure 10: Parents' Perceptions of How Hard Their Child Works in School Compared to Other Students

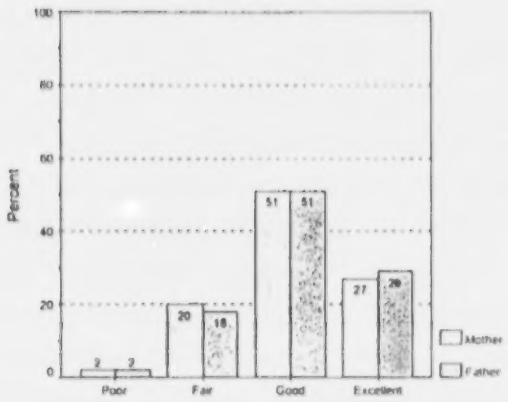

Figure 11: Parents' Perceptions of Their Child as a Student

Nearly two thirds of the mothers (65%) and almost half of the fathers (42%) reported occasionally or frequently meeting with their child's teachers to discuss their child's academic progress. One fourth of the mothers (25%) and nearly a third of the fathers (31%) indicated they seldom met with the teacher. Only 10% of the mothers said they never met with their child's teachers, compared to 27% of the fathers.

Parents were asked about their satisfaction with a series of topics regarding their child's experiences during the school year. Over 90% of the parents were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's education (92% mothers, 91% fathers) and the level of discipline maintained in the classroom by their child's teacher (92% mothers, 90% fathers). About three fourths of both mothers and fathers were satisfied with each of the following: school's approach towards college preparation (77% mothers and fathers), the respect that teachers and students have for each other (75% mothers, 77% fathers), the level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal (73% mothers, 74% fathers), and the school's encouragement of family involvement (72% mothers, 77% fathers).

Parents were asked to indicate which ways were helpful in learning about how their child was doing in school. Nearly all parents reported that report cards (97% of mothers and fathers) and talking to their child (89% mothers, 90% fathers) were helpful or very helpful. Further, more than half indicated that parent/teacher conferences (61% mothers, 66% fathers), homework sign-off (60% mothers, 63% fathers), phone calls from teacher(s) (55% mothers, 60% fathers), and notes from teacher(s) (54% mothers, 60% fathers) were helpful.

Almost half of the mothers (46%) and fathers (47%) indicated they would like their child to obtain an advanced degree. Thirty-two percent of each group indicated they hoped their child would obtain a bachelor degree, followed by associate degree (9%) and high school graduation (8%) (see Figure 12 for further details). When asked the main reason their child might not continue his or her education after high school, the most frequent reason for both mothers and fathers was that college was too expensive (27% mothers, 25% fathers). However, 39% of the mothers and 40% of the fathers indicated that there was no reason and that their child would definitely go to college.

When asked who provided their child with information about options for continuing education after high school, 86% of the mothers and 85% of the fathers indicated that they provided such information. Parents also indicated that teachers, guidance counselors, grandparents, and other family members provided information. See Figure 13 for percentages of the most frequent providers of this information.

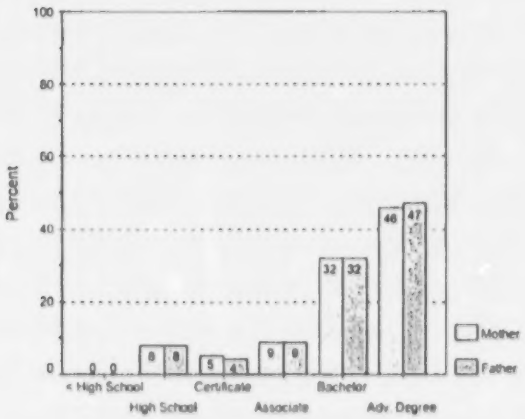

Figure 12: Parents' Academic Expectations for Their Child

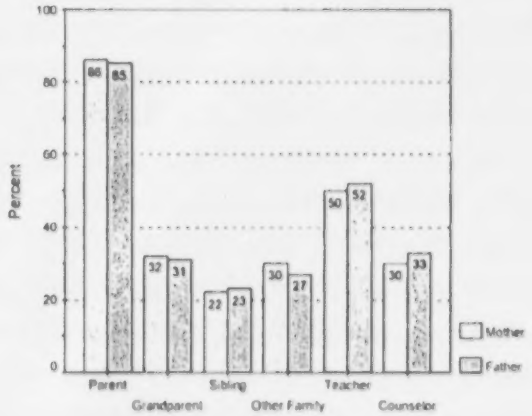

Figure 13: Parents' Perceptions of People Who Provide Educational Information to Their Child

Only 8% of the mothers and fathers reported that they had already talked with someone at their child's school about the courses and grades required to get into college. About a third of the parents indicated they were familiar with the entrance requirements for two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and vocational schools (see Figure 14 for further details). Ninety-one percent of the mothers and 85% of the fathers reported that they had already talked with their child about attending college.

More than a third of the parents reported that they were saving money for their child's college education (38% mothers, 40% fathers). About a third also thought their child probably or definitely would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college (38% mothers, 40% fathers) and 38% of both groups were not sure (see Figure 15 for further details).

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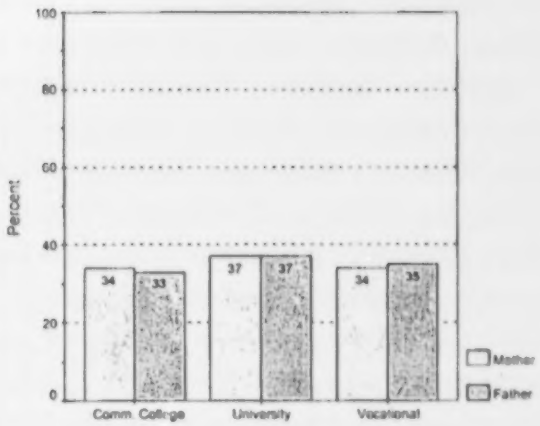

Figure 14: Parents' Awareness of Entrance Requirements for Postsecondary Schools

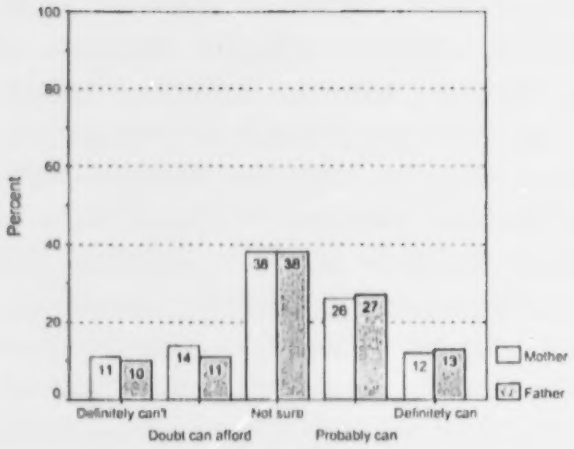

Figure 15: Parents' Perceptions of Child's Ability to Afford Postsecondary Education

Parents were asked to estimate the one-year tuition expense for their child to attend a four-year public college in their state. The actual average cost of tuition at a four-year public college in West Virginia is $2,548 and the national average is $3,506 (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001). Both sets of responses varied greatly for this item. Only 20% of both groups selected the range of $1,001 to $5,000, which included the state and national averages. Twenty-eight percent of mothers and 29% of fathers estimated the cost as $5,001 to $10,000; 20% of mothers and 19% of fathers estimated the cost as $10,001 to $15,000; and 32% of both groups estimated the cost to be more than $15,000 (see Figure 16 for further details).

When asked if they had heard of a variety of sources of money for education beyond high school, responses from mothers and fathers were similar. Both groups were most aware of federal student loans (79% mothers, 76% fathers) and athletic scholarships (69% mothers, 70% fathers). Both groups were least familiar with federal work-study programs (39% mothers, 35% fathers) and institutional scholarships (36% each of mothers and fathers). See Figure 17 for a graphical depiction of parents' awareness of financial aid sources. When asked if they thought their child would likely qualify for enough of the above sources of money to attend college, 74% of the mothers and 73% of fathers responded positively.

For both groups, the most frequently obtained level of education was high school (44% mothers, 52% fathers). Mothers also reported less than high school (12%), certificate (20%), associate (10%), bachelor (9%), and advanced degree (5%). Fathers also reported less than high school (12%), certificate (14%), associate (6%), bachelor (10%), and advanced degree (5%). Eighty-six percent of the mothers reported that another adult lived in their home, as did 92% of the fathers. Thirteen percent of the mothers and 14% of the fathers reported that someone in their home was currently attending college. Seventy-two percent of the mothers and 70% of the fathers reported that they use a computer in their home.

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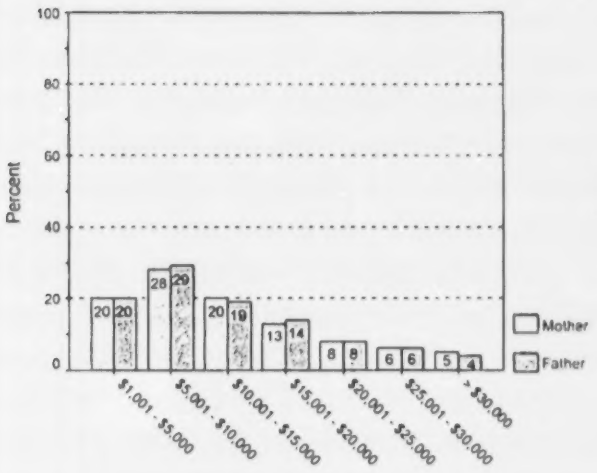

Figure 16: Parents' Estimate of Yearly Tuition for an In-State Four-Year Public College

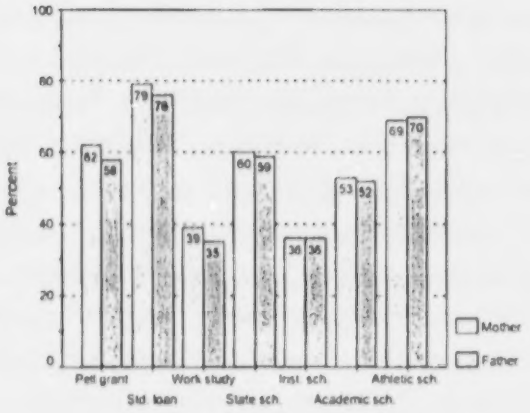

Figure 17: Parents' Awareness of Financial Aid Sources

When asked the total yearly income of all persons in their household, responses were similar across both groups. Twenty-one percent of mothers and 25% of fathers reported a household income of more than $50,000, 10% of mothers and 12% of fathers indicated $40,001 to $50,000, 18% of each group indicated $30,001 to $40,000, and about half of each group indicated less than $30,000 (51% mothers, 46% fathers).

Responses to ethnicity were nearly identical for mothers and fathers. Ninety-six percent of both groups indicated that they were White, 2% of mothers and 1% of fathers indicated American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1% of each group indicated Black or African American.

Finally, parents were given a listing of potential topics for free workshops and were asked to indicate which they would be interested in attending if they were offered at a convenient time, with free transportation. For most of the 12 given topics, the mothers were consistently more interested in attending than the fathers. Both groups indicated most interest in topics relating to computers/Internet, financial aid, college preparation or requirements, and child rearing. Both groups were least interested in improving their own academic skills. See Figure 18 for a graphical depiction of the six workshop topics of most interest to both mothers and fathers.

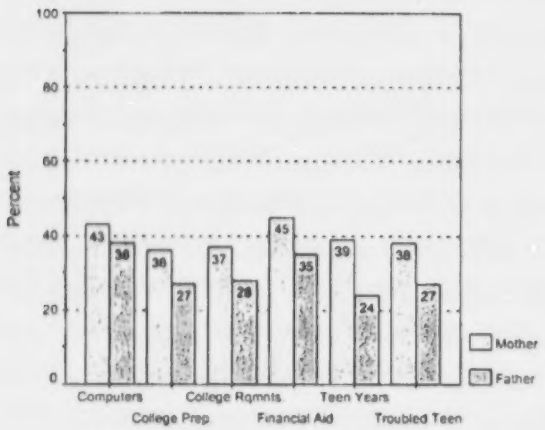

Figure 18: Six Workshop Topics of Most Interest to Parents

CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the Fairmont State College regional GEAR UP data for West Virginia seventh-grade students and their parents. These conclusions are presented below by topical themes.

Academics

- Homework seems to be fairly heavy for the majority of students. More than half of the parents and students report that students spend about two and a half hours per day on homework. This estimate may be slightly inflated since a half hour is the smallest increment a student could choose other than "never" in the response options for each of the five subjects.

- Overall, students seem to have a positive view of their academic abilities and of the effort they put into their studies. More than three fourths view themselves as good or excellent students. Further, nearly two thirds believe they work as hard as other students and about a third report that they work harder or much harder. Parents have a similar perception of the effort their child puts into education. About a third perceive that their child works harder or much harder than other children and about half believe their child works about the same; three fourths believe that their child is either an excellent or good student.

- In general, students believe that they have good study skills and report doing well in English, math, science, and history. For those not doing well, their most frequent explanations are that they have a grade of C or D, that they don't do well on tests, that the subject is boring, or that they don't like the subject.

- About a third of the students believe they do need help with math; about a fourth with science, social studies, and English. Students seem fairly open to the idea of tutoring, with about a third expressing interest in an after-school tutoring program and two thirds expressing interest in a mentoring system.

- The majority of students seem to be technologically literate. Three fourths report having used a computer for school projects and two thirds that they have already taken a computer class at school. Further, about three fourths indicate they use a computer at home; most have Internet access. About the same percent of parents also report using a computer at home.

Parent Involvement

- Family members seem to play a critical role in helping students understand and complete homework tasks. The majority of students report that they first look to a parent for such help and also frequently consult with a friend, a sibling, a grandparent, or some other family member. Parents do not seem to place as much value on their contribution to their child's homework. About a third of the parents report helping their child frequently or every day, with mothers helping more than fathers.

- Despite parents' satisfaction with the amount of family involvement encouraged by the school, their participation in school-based activities seems to be limited in scope. About two thirds of the mothers and half of the fathers report that they occasionally or frequently meet with their child's teachers. However, nearly 30% of the fathers report never meeting with a teacher, compared to only 10% of the mothers. About three fourths of the mothers and the fathers report they occasionally or frequently attend activities at their child's school.

- Parents seem pleased with their child's educational experiences for this school year. More than 85% indicate satisfaction with education in general, college preparation, discipline, respect, and family involvement. Further, more than 80% find that conferences, homework sign-off, report cards, talking to their child, and phone calls or notes from the teacher help them stay informed of their child's progress.

- Mothers are consistently more interested than fathers in attending free educational workshops. Nearly half of the mothers are interested in topics such as computers, college preparation or requirements, financial aid, and child rearing, compared to only about a third of the fathers.

Student Aspirations

- Students report being well supported in the areas of confidence to take action, sense of accomplishment, and heroes. They report feeling less well supported in fun and excitement, belonging, and curiosity and creativity. In other words, while students report feeling fairly confident and successful about their learning, they do not seem to view their learning as particularly interesting or exciting, do not feel that they are given the opportunity for exploration or investigation, and do not feel that teachers particularly value their thoughts or feelings.

- Overall, student and parent aspirations are high for the student's postsecondary education. Almost two thirds of the students believe that they will obtain either a bachelor or advanced degree, and about three fourths believe their parents want them to get a bachelor or advanced degree. Similarly, about three fourths of the parents report wanting their child to obtain either degree.

College Awareness and Preparation

- Overall, students seem to be at least superficially thinking about the prospect of college. Nearly all the students believe that they have the ability to go to college and believe that college graduates earn more money than those without a college degree. About three fourths perceive college as very important and indicate that they do want to attend a postsecondary institution. About three fourths believe they need more education to obtain a satisfying job and that continuing their education might help them make career decisions. Further, students most frequently mentioned occupations that require at least an undergraduate education (i.e., athlete, veterinarian, doctor, lawyer, teacher).

- Students' awareness of the various types of postsecondary institutions is fairly high. More than three fourths are aware of four-year colleges, and about two thirds know about two-year colleges or vocational schools. Yet, while about half of the students report having discussed college requirements with an adult at home, less than a fourth have talked with a school counselor. Similarly, most parents report they have discussed college options with their child, but have not had discussions with school personnel about required courses and grades.

- Students do not seem to have a real understanding of what is required of them now to begin preparing for college. Only about half know which courses are needed to adequately prepare them and report that they plan to take such academically challenging courses as chemistry, algebra, or a foreign language. Only a fourth plan to take physics, and less than a fourth plan to take calculus or trigonometry.

- Students view parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices and most value their input to educational decision making. However, only about a third of the parents are familiar with college entrance requirements and believe they have enough information on high school graduation requirements.

- There seems to be a wide range in parents' awareness of financial aid options for postsecondary education. Between a third to three fourths are aware of the various types of available financial aid, and three fourths believe their child will qualify for such aid. Further, only about half of the parents and students believe that the students probably or definitely will be able to afford college.

- Very few of the students and parents seem to have a realistic estimate of the tuition expense for one year at a four-year in-state public college. Only 20% of both groups selected the expense range that included the state and national average tuition expenses ($2,548 and $3,506 respectively).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The GEAR UP project can make a substantial difference in students' lives by working to alleviate some of the educational and social problems within the state. Based on the findings and conclusions presented in this report, the following recommendations are made to Fairmont State College GEAR UP staff in the interest of increasing students' and parents' awareness of and interest in postsecondary education for the nine-county region served by the project.

- Encourage student participation in tutoring and mentoring programs, especially in math.
- Emphasize the importance of college-preparatory courses and encourage students to plan on taking such courses, especially physics, calculus, and trigonometry.
- Help all students understand that college is a viable option for them and provide information about degree requirements for various career choices.
- Provide students and parents with information about and entrance requirements for both two- and four-year colleges, as well as for vocational and business schools.
- Provide students and parents with information about and requirements for various financial aid sources for financing postsecondary education.
- Work to find ways to increase parents' involvement in the academic lives of their children, beyond occasionally meeting with teachers or attending school activities.
- Establish a schedule of educational workshops for parents on the topics of computers, college preparation or requirements, financial aid, and child-rearing.
- Work to find ways to make learning more interesting and exciting for students, and provide more opportunities for individual exploration and investigation.
- Work to find ways of increasing students' sense of belonging in the school community.
- In terms of improving data collection for the next year's survey of seventh graders, one suggestion is offered. Staff may want to consider again revising the parent and student survey items dealing with the amount of time a child spends on homework. The items could be changed to reflect weekly amounts of time per subject spent on homework or 15-minute increments could be added to the daily time estimates. Either revision would provide respondents with options that more accurately reflect the amount of time that students spend per subject on homework.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A:
Completed SEDCAR Standards Checklist

AEL SEDCAR Standards Checklist

The *Standards for Educational Data Collection and Reporting* (1991) were used in the development of this (check one):

- ☐ Study group report
- ☐ Field test report
- ☐ Minigrant final report
- ☐ Implementation report
- ☒ Research report
- ☐ Impact study report
- ☐ Other _____

The SEDCAR Standards were consulted and used as indicated in the table below (check or mark as appropriate):

SEDCAR Standard Number and Descriptor	The Standard was deemed applicable; and, to the extent feasible, was taken into account.*	The Standard was deemed applicable; but could not be taken into account.	The Standard was not deemed applicable.	Exception was taken to the Standard.
1.1 Creating an Infrastructure to Manage Data Collection Activities	X			
1.2 Justifying Data Collection Activities	X			
1.3 Fostering Commitment of all Participants	X			
1.4 Creating an Appropriate Management Process	X			
2.1 Formulating and Refining Study Questions	X			
2.2 Choosing the Data Collection Methods	X			
2.3 Developing a Sampling Plan			X	
2.4 Assessing the Value of Obtainable Data	X			
2.5 Transforming Study Question Concepts into Measures	X			
2.6 Designing the Data Collection Instrument	X			
2.7 Minimizing Total Study Error (Sampling and Nonsampling)	X			
2.8 Reviewing and Pretesting Data Collection Instruments, Forms, and Procedures	X			
2.9 Preparing a Written Design	X			
3.1 Preparing for Data Collection	X			
3.2 Selecting and Training Data Collection Staff			X	
3.3 Ethical Treatment of Data Providers	X			
3.4 Minimizing Burden and Nonresponse	X			
3.5 Implementing Data Collection Quality Control Procedures	X			

*Four column headings from Evaluation *Standards*.

SEDCAR Standard Number and Descriptor	The Standard was deemed applicable; and, to the extent feasible, was taken into account.*	The Standard was deemed applicable; but could not be taken into account.	The Standard was not deemed applicable.	Exception was taken to the Standard.
3.6 Documenting Data Collections	X			
4.1 Planning Systems Requirements	X			
4.2 Designing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.3 Developing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.4 Testing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.5 Planning for Data Preparation	X			
4.6 Preparing Data for Processing and Analysis	X			
4.7 Maintaining Programs and Data Files	X			
4.8 Documenting Data Processing Activities	X			
4.9 Evaluating Data Processing Systems	X			
5.1 Preparing an Analysis Plan	X			
5.2 Developing Analysis Variables	X			
5.3 Applying Appropriate Weights			X	
5.4 Estimating Sampling and Nonsampling Errors			X	
5.5 Determining Statistical Significance			X	
6.1 Presenting Findings	X			
6.2 Reviewing the Report	X			
6.3 Releasing Data	X			
6.4 Disseminating Data	X			
6.5 Preparing Documentation and Technical Reports	X			

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Appendix B:
Regional Summary by Survey

Regional: March 2002 (N = 2,213)

Fairmont State College:
GEAR UP Partnership Grant

2001-2002
7th Grade Student Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O **Not like this:** O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

School and School Work

1. Who usually helps you with your homework? *(Select all that apply.)*

88%	Parent or guardian	27%	Friend
15%	Grandparent	22%	Teacher
24%	Brother or sister	6%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
13%	Other family member	5%	Some other person

2. Compared with other students, how hard do you think you work in school?

3%	Not nearly as hard	26%	Harder
6%	Not as hard	4%	Much harder
60%	About the same		

3. What type of student do you consider yourself to be?

2%	Poor	67%	Good
16%	Fair	15%	Excellent

4. How important to you is what each of the following people think you should do about your education?		*Not Impt.*	*Some Impt.*	*Very Impt.*
a.	Parent or guardian	1%	8%	92%
b.	Grandparent	5%	29%	66%
c.	Brother or sister	25%	43%	32%
d.	Other family member	12%	44%	44%
e.	Friend	19%	55%	26%
f.	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	27%	35%	39%
g.	Teacher	4%	20%	76%
h.	Guidance counselor	16%	37%	47%
i.	Principal or assistant principal	11%	28%	61%
j.	Coach	22%	34%	44%
k.	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)	18%	31%	51%
l.	Some other person	38%	39%	22%

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5. I am doing well (a grade of A or B) in each of these subjects:

		Yes	No	Not Taking
a.	English	82%	16%	2%
b.	History	73%	19%	8%
c.	Math	75%	24%	1%
d.	Science	80%	19%	2%

6. If you are not doing well in a particular subject, why not? *(Select all that apply for each subject.)*

	Eng.	His.	Math	Science
Have a C or D	16%	16%	21%	15%
Subject is too hard	6%	13%	17%	11%
Subject is boring	15%	20%	13%	12%
Don't do well on tests	13%	18%	19%	19%
Don't do all the assignments	8%	8%	10%	8%
Don't like the teacher	7%	7%	8%	9%
Don't understand the subject	8%	10%	13%	9%
Don't like the subject	12%	15%	15%	12%
Don't pay enough attention in class	8%	10%	8%	9%
Don't study hard enough	9%	14%	12%	13%
Other	5%	5%	6%	5%
Don't Know	6%	7%	7%	6%

7. Which subjects do you think you need help with? *(Select all that apply.)*

22%	English	26%	Science
19%	History	23%	Social Studies
38%	Math	20%	Spelling
15%	Reading	8%	Other

8. What is your favorite subject in school?

12%	Art	4%	Reading
9%	Band	11%	Science
6%	English	3%	Social Studies
2%	History	5%	Spelling
18%	Math	13%	Other
18%	Selected more than one response.		

9. What makes that subject your favorite? *(Select all that apply.)*

48%	It's fun or cool	38%	I like the activities
43%	It's easy to understand	23%	It's challenging
42%	I like the teacher	42%	I like the subject
54%	I am good at it	12%	Other

10. Which of the following courses do you plan on taking in high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

51%	Algebra	62%	Foreign Language
18%	Calculus	26%	Physics
48%	Chemistry	18%	Trigonometry

11. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours <u>each day</u> do you spend on homework?

		0	½	1	1½	2	2½	3	Not Taking
a.	English	17%	63%	14%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%
b.	Science	20%	52%	19%	5%	2%	0%	1%	1%
c.	Math	9%	50%	26%	8%	3%	1%	2%	1%
d.	History/Social Studies	15%	54%	19%	6%	3%	1%	1%	2%
e.	All other subjects combined	10%	32%	22%	12%	10%	4%	8%	2%

		Yes	No
12.	I think I have good study skills.	73%	27%
13.	I would be interested in attending an after-school tutoring program.	35%	65%
14.	I think I have the ability to go to college.	90%	10%
15.	In school, I participate in sports.	62%	38%
16.	In school, I participate in clubs.	39%	61%
17.	In school, I participate in student government.	18%	82%
18.	I use a computer for school projects.	78%	22%
19.	I have taken a computer class at school.	61%	39%
20.	I use a computer at home.	77%	23%
21.	If you have a computer at home, do you have Internet access?	69%	31%
22.	I plan to be living in West Virginia when I'm 30.	54%	46%
23.	I plan to be working in West Virginia when I'm 30.	52%	48%
24.	I would be interested in having a "college-type" mentor or buddy.	65%	35%

Knowledge about College

		Yes	No
25.	Have you ever talked with your school counselor or someone else at your school about the entrance requirements for college?	21%	79%
26.	Do you have an idea of what courses you should take in high school to prepare you for college?	55%	45%
27.	Have you heard of the following types of schools?	Yes	No
a.	Two-year or community college	57%	43%
b.	Four-year college or university	81%	19%
c.	Vocational, trade, or business school	60%	40%
28.	Do you think a person with a college degree typically earns more money in one year than a person who does not have a college degree?	86%	14%

29. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

6%	Up to $1,000	14%	$15,001 - $20,000
19%	$1,001 - $5,000	10%	$20,001 - $25,000
20%	$5,001 - $10,000	6%	$25,001 - $30,000
17%	$10,001 - $15,000	8%	More than $30,000

30. How important to your future is getting an education beyond high school?

7%	Don't know	13%	Some important
2%	Not important	78%	Very important

Plans for the Future

31. What do you want to be when you grow up?

1%	Actor/actress	5%	Doctor	0%	Pilot
1%	Architect	1%	Engineer	1%	Police officer
1%	Artist	4%	Lawyer	1%	Race-car driver
7%	Athlete (any sport)	2%	Mechanic	1%	Scientist
0%	Astronaut	2%	Military	2%	Singer/musician
1%	Beautician	1%	Model	4%	Teacher
1%	Chef	2%	Nurse	2%	Truck driver
1%	Computer/video	1%	Pharmacist	6%	Veterinarian
1%	Construction worker	1%	Photographer	10%	Other Career
1%	Designer/decorator	0%	Physical therapist	8%	Don't Know
31%	Selected more than one response				

	Yes	*No*
32. Do you think you will continue your education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school, etc.)?	90%	10%
33. Before entering the seventh grade, had you ever heard of GEAR UP?	87%	13%

34. From whom do you get most of your information about your options for continuing your education after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

83%	Parent or guardian	45%	Teacher
33%	Grandparent	10%	Guidance counselor
21%	Brother or sister	11%	Principal or assistant principal
26%	Other family member	6%	Coach
21%	Friend	9%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
5%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	13%	Some other person

35. How far in school do you think you will get?

1%	Less than high school graduation	10%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
18%	High school graduation	32%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
4%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	35%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

36. What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school?

49%	No reason, I definitely will go	4%	I want to join the military
9%	It costs too much or I can't afford it	1%	Don't want to be away from home
2%	Don't need college for planned job	2%	Just don't like school
2%	My grades are not good enough	2%	I want to start a family
2%	I'm just not interested	2%	Some other reason
2%	I need or want to work	13%	Don't know
13%	Selected more than one response		

37. Do you think you will be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university after high school?

5%	Definitely can't afford it	33%	Probably can afford it
8%	I doubt if I can afford it	17%	Definitely will be able to afford it
36%	I'm not sure		

		Yes	*No*
38.	During the past year, have you discussed academic requirements for attending a four-year college with any adults in your household?	44%	56%

39. Have any of your family members attended college?

		Yes	*No*
a.	Mother or female guardian	50%	50%
b.	Father or male guardian	40%	60%
c.	Grandparent	43%	57%
d.	Brother or sister	22%	78%

40. How much education do you think your father or male guardian wants you to get?

1%	Less than high school graduation	8%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
12%	High school graduation	27%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
5%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	46%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

41. How much education do you think your mother or female guardian wants you to get?

2%	Less than high school graduation	6%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
10%	High school graduation	26%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
7%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	49%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

Background

		Male	*Female*			
42.	What is your gender?	48%	52%			
		11	*12*	*13*	*14*	*Other*
43.	How old are you?	1%	74%	22%	3%	0%

44. How do you describe yourself?

3%	American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	90%	White
2%	Black or African American	1%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	2%	Multiracial

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45. How many brothers do you have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	32%	40%	17%	7%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
46. How many sisters do you have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	34%	40%	18%	6%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
47. Counting yourself, how many people live in your home?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0%	0%	4%	19%	38%	24%	9%	4%	1%	1%

Aspirations

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement for each of the following items:

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**) 2 = Disagree (**D**) 3 = Don't Know (**DK**) 4 = Agree (**A**) 5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

(Highest percentages are in blue print)		*SD*	*D*	*DK*	*A*	*SA*
48.	I need more education or training after high school to get a satisfying job.	3%	7%	15%	32%	43%
49.	I want to make some money immediately after high school.	2%	4%	18%	41%	34%
50.	I plan to continue my education after high school, no matter what my career.	3%	5%	20%	27%	46%
51.	I can get a satisfying job without further education after high school.	25%	27%	25%	16%	7%
52.	Continuing my education after high school might help me decide what to do.	2%	5%	17%	48%	28%
53.	I am anxious to begin my career as soon as possible after high school.	8%	15%	29%	27%	22%
54.	The opinions, plans of friends help me make decisions for after high school.	12%	24%	29%	27%	7%
55.	Getting a job right after high school might help me decide what I want to do.	9%	16%	30%	34%	10%
56.	I won't be able to afford to continue my education after high school.	24%	22%	40%	8%	6%
57.	The opinions/plans of family help me make decisions for after high school.	4%	8%	20%	47%	21%
58.	I can take control of situations.	3%	6%	23%	50%	19%
59.	I know what I want and I go after it.	2%	6%	19%	44%	30%
60.	I am a good leader.	3%	8%	35%	36%	17%
61.	I can select the best way to solve a problem.	2%	10%	35%	41%	11%
62.	I do what I say I will.	3%	9%	23%	48%	17%
63.	I usually have fun in class.	6%	12%	17%	50%	15%
64.	I am a positive role model to other students.	6%	9%	43%	31%	12%
65.	Teachers care about my problems and feelings.	4%	7%	30%	41%	18%
66.	Teachers respect my thoughts.	4%	6%	31%	43%	17%
67.	I seek solutions to complex problems.	3%	8%	31%	44%	14%
68.	I have a strong caring relationship with an adult.	2%	3%	15%	36%	44%
69.	Teachers care about my success in class.	3%	2%	18%	46%	30%
70.	I believe I can always improve.	1%	2%	7%	47%	44%
71.	Teachers expect me to succeed.	1%	2%	17%	50%	30%
72.	I am confident in my ability to do well.	1%	3%	12%	51%	33%

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**) 2 = Disagree (**D**) 3 = Don't Know (**DK**) 4 = Agree (**A**) 5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

		SD	*D*	*DK*	*A*	*SA*
73.	I take action on causes I believe in.	2%	3%	21%	49%	25%
74.	Teachers value my opinions.	3%	6%	39%	38%	14%
75.	I accept responsibility for my actions.	2%	4%	12%	58%	25%
76.	I am proud of my school.	4%	7%	18%	44%	27%
77.	Teachers help me to succeed.	2%	4%	14%	53%	27%
78.	I put forth the necessary effort to reach a goal.	2%	4%	16%	49%	30%
79.	Teachers support me when I try something new.	4%	7%	29%	44%	17%
80.	My courses help me to understand what is happening in my everyday life.	2%	7%	27%	46%	17%
81.	Teachers tell me I do a good job when I try my best.	2%	6%	13%	51%	27%
82.	I am eager to learn new things.	2%	4%	14%	51%	28%
83.	Teachers make learning exciting.	6%	15%	26%	40%	14%
84.	I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.	5%	10%	27%	34%	24%
85.	Teachers allow me to explore topics I find interesting.	4%	10%	26%	44%	16%
86.	I am not usually bored in school.	12%	20%	20%	36%	12%
87.	Teachers expect me to be a good decision maker.	2%	4%	27%	46%	22%
88.	Anyone can succeed if they work hard enough.	1%	2%	8%	37%	51%
89.	I have opportunities to decide for myself what I learn about in school.	4%	7%	20%	45%	24%
90.	Teachers encourage me to ask questions.	3%	5%	17%	45%	30%

Items 63-90 are from the *Students Speak* survey developed by the National Center for Student Aspirations, College of Education and Human Development, University of Maine.

Aspirations Subscales

		Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	**Belonging:** A relationship between two or more individuals characterized by a sense of connection, support, and community.	3.65	0.77
2.	**Heroes:** People whom children admire and imitate because of their personal talent.	3.83	0.64
3.	**Sense of Accomplishment:** In addition to academic success, recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as important signs of children's success.	4.06	0.65
4.	**Fun and Excitement:** Involves being interested in something, being emotionally involved, or having an intense experience or desire of some kind.	3.37	0.91
5.	**Spirit of Adventure:** Characterized as a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges.	3.77	0.62
6.	**Curiosity and Creativity:** Characterized as inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries.	3.70	0.69
7.	**Leadership and Responsibility:** Children's sense of control and responsibility for their actions and words.	3.76	0.60
8.	**Confidence to Take Action:** The extent to which children believe in themselves and is related to self-regard, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect.	4.13	0.63

Regional: April 2002 (N = 1,921)
Mothers

Fairmont State College
GEAR UP Partnership Grant:

2001-2002
Parent Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O Not this: O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

General Information

1. What is your relationship to the seventh-grade child who brought this survey home?

MALE RESPONDENTS:		FEMALE RESPONDENTS:	
0%	Father or male guardian	95%	Mother or female guardian
0%	Step or foster father	2%	Step or foster mother
0%	Grandfather	2%	Grandmother
0%	Friend of child's mother	0%	Friend of child's father
0%	Other male	0%	Other female

Your Child

2. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours each day does your child spend on homework?

		0	*½*	*1*	*1½*	*2*	*2½*	*3*	*Not Taking*
a.	English	15%	70%	12%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
b.	Science	18%	65%	13%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%
c.	Math	8%	63%	22%	4%	2%	0%	0%	0%
d.	History/Social Studies	13%	67%	15%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
e.	All other subjects	17%	62%	14%	3%	2%	0%	1%	1%

3. For each of the following subjects, about how often each week do you help your child with homework?

		Never	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*	*Every Day*	*Not Taking*
a.	English	11%	52%	21%	15%	0%
b.	Science	13%	52%	22%	13%	0%
c.	Math	10%	46%	26%	18%	0%
d.	History/Social Studies	11%	53%	22%	13%	1%
e.	All other subjects	11%	57%	19%	12%	0%

4. Compared with other students, how hard do you think your child works in school?

3%	Not nearly as hard	28%	Harder
10%	Not as hard	6%	Much harder
52%	About the same		

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5. What type of student is your child? (Consider academic performance and study habits).

2%	Poor	51%	Good
20%	Fair	27%	Excellent

	Yes	*No*
6. Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses or grades needed to graduate from high school?	14%	86%
7. Do you feel you have enough information about high school graduation requirements?	34%	66%

	Never	*Seldom*	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*
8. How often do you attend activities or events at your child's school?	4%	14%	44%	38%
9. How often do you meet with your child's teachers to discuss the academic progress of your child?	10%	25%	51%	14%

10. How satisfied are you regarding your child's experiences this year with each of the following:	*Very Dissat.*	*Dissat-isfied*	*Satisfied*	*Very Satisfied*
a. His/her education	1%	6%	79%	13%
b. School's approach towards college preparation	2%	12%	77%	8%
c. The level of discipline maintained in the classroom by your child's teacher	2%	6%	79%	13%
d. The respect that teachers and students have for each other	3%	11%	75%	12%
e. The level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal	3%	7%	73%	17%
f. The school's encouragement of family involvement	2%	10%	72%	15%

11. How helpful are each of the following ways of learning about how your child is doing in school:	*Not Help-ful at All*	*Not too Helpful*	*Helpful*	*Very Helpful*
a. Parent/teacher conferences	2%	8%	61%	29%
b. Homework sign-off	4%	14%	60%	22%
c. Report cards	0%	2%	52%	45%
d. Talking to my child	1%	9%	51%	38%
e. Phone calls from teacher(s)	5%	8%	55%	32%
f. Notes from teacher(s)	4%	6%	54%	36%

Your Child's Future Plans

12. How far in school would you like to see your child go?

0%	Less than high school graduation	9%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
8%	High school graduation	32%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
5%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	46%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

13. Who provides your child with information about options for continuing education after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

86%	Parent or guardian	50%	Teacher
32%	Grandparent	30%	Guidance counselor
22%	Brother or sister	13%	Principal or assistant principal
30%	Other family member	8%	Coach
18%	Friend	19%	GEAR UP staff (*mentor, tutor*)
9%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	7%	Some other person

14. What would be the main reason for your child not continuing his/her education after high school?

39%	No reason, child definitely will go	1%	Child wants to join the military
27%	It costs too much or cannot afford it	0%	College is too far from home
1%	College not necessary for planned job	1%	Child doesn't like school
3%	Grades are not good enough	0%	Child wants to start a family
4%	Child is just not interested	2%	Some other reason
1%	Child wants or needs to work	10%	Don't know
10%	Multiple Response		

Knowledge about College

		Yes	*No*
15.	Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses and grades needed to get into college?	8%	92%
16.	Are you familiar with the entrance requirements for the three basic types of postsecondary schools?		
	a. Two-year or community college	34%	66%
	b. Four-year college or university	37%	63%
	c. Vocational, trade, or business school	34%	66%
17.	Have you talked with your child about attending college?	91%	9%
18.	Have you started saving any money for your child's college education?	38%	62%

19. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

1%	Up to $1,000	13%	$15,001 - $20,000
20%	$1,001 - $5,000	8%	$20,001 - $25,000
28%	$5,001 - $10,000	6%	$25,001 - $30,000
20%	$10,001 - $15,000	5%	More than $30,000

20. Do you think your child would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university?

11%	Definitely can't afford it	26%	Probably can afford it
14%	Doubt if can afford it	12%	Definitely will be able to afford it
38%	Not sure		

21. Have you heard of the following sources of money for education beyond high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

62%	Federal Pell grants	36%	Institutional scholarships
79%	Federal student loans	53%	Private or academic scholarships
39%	Federal work-study	69%	Athletic scholarships
60%	State scholarships		

		Yes	*No*
22.	Do you think your child is likely to qualify for enough of the above sources of financial assistance to attend college?	74%	26%

Background

		Male	*Female*
23.	What is your gender?	0%	100%

24. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

12%	Less than high school	10%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
44%	Completed high school	9%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
20%	Certificate (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	5%	Advanced degree (master or doctorate)

		Yes	*No*
25.	Are there any other adults in your household?	86%	14%
26.	Is anyone in your household currently attending college?	13%	87%
27.	Do you use a computer at home?	72%	28%

28. What is the total yearly income of all persons in your household? (Include salaries, interest, retirement, and public assistance for all household members.)

11%	$10,000 or less	18%	$30,001 to $40,000
19%	$10,001 to $20,000	10%	$40,001 to $50,000
21%	$20,001 to $30,000	21%	More than $50,000

29. How do you describe yourself?

2%	American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	96%	White
1%	Black or African American	0%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	0%	Multiracial

30. Which of the following free workshops would you attend if they were offered at a convenient time, with free transportation? *(Select all that apply.)*

43%	Understanding Computers/Internet	36%	Preparing for College - A Parent's Course
28%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Math	37%	Understanding College Requirements
16%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in English	45%	Understanding Financial Aid/Scholarships
10%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Spelling	9%	Preparing to Take the GED
11%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Writing	39%	Understanding the Teenage Years
9%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Speaking	38%	How to Know the Signs of a Troubled Teen

Regional: April 2002 (N = 1,300)
Fathers

Fairmont State College
GEAR UP Partnership Grant:

2001-2002
Parent Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O Not this: O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

General Information

1. What is your relationship to the seventh-grade child who brought this survey home?

MALE RESPONDENTS:		FEMALE RESPONDENTS:	
88%	Father or male guardian	0%	Mother or female guardian
9%	Step or foster father	0%	Step or foster mother
2%	Grandfather	0%	Grandmother
1%	Friend of child's mother	0%	Friend of child's father
1%	Other male	0%	Other female

Your Child

2. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours each day does your child spend on homework?

	0	*½*	*1*	*1½*	*2*	*2½*	*3*	*Not Taking*
a. English	16%	69%	10%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%
b. Science	17%	66%	12%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%
c. Math	7%	63%	23%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%
d. History/Social Studies	14%	67%	14%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%
e. All other subjects	18%	61%	15%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%

3. For each of the following subjects, about how often each week do you help your child with homework?

	Never	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*	*Every Day*	*Not Taking*
a. English	28%	53%	12%	7%	0%
b. Science	22%	57%	14%	7%	0%
c. Math	16%	52%	21%	10%	0%
d. History/Social Studies	21%	57%	15%	7%	0%
e. All other subjects	22%	60%	11%	7%	0%

4. Compared with other students, how hard do you think your child works in school?

3%	Not nearly as hard	32%	Harder
8%	Not as hard	6%	Much harder
51%	About the same		

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5. What type of student is your child? (Consider academic performance and study habits).

2%	Poor	51%	Good
18%	Fair	29%	Excellent

	Yes	*No*
6. Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses or grades needed to graduate from high school?	13%	87%
7. Do you feel you have enough information about high school graduation requirements?	38%	62%

	Never	*Seldom*	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*
8. How often do you attend activities or events at your child's school?	10%	19%	42%	28%
9. How often do you meet with your child's teachers to discuss the academic progress of your child?	27%	31%	36%	6%

10. How satisfied are you regarding your child's experiences this year with each of the following:	*Very Dissat.*	*Dissat-isfied*	*Satisfied*	*Very Satisfied*
a. His/her education	1%	8%	79%	12%
b. School's approach towards college preparation	2%	14%	77%	7%
c. The level of discipline maintained in the classroom by your child's teacher	2%	8%	80%	10%
d. The respect that teachers and students have for each other	2%	11%	77%	10%
e. The level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal	3%	8%	74%	14%
f. The school's encouragement of family involvement	2%	10%	77%	11%

11. How helpful are each of the following ways of learning about how your child is doing in school:	*Not Helpful at All*	*Not too Helpful*	*Helpful*	*Very Helpful*
a. Parent/teacher conferences	4%	10%	66%	20%
b. Homework sign-off	5%	14%	63%	18%
c. Report cards	1%	3%	58%	39%
d. Talking to my child	2%	8%	59%	31%
e. Phone calls from teacher(s)	7%	10%	60%	23%
f. Notes from teacher(s)	5%	8%	60%	27%

Your Child's Future Plans

12. How far in school would you like to see your child go?

0%	Less than high school graduation	9%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
8%	High school graduation	32%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
4%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	47%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

13. Who provides your child with information about options for continuing education after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

85%	Parent or guardian	52%	Teacher
31%	Grandparent	33%	Guidance counselor
23%	Brother or sister	15%	Principal or assistant principal
27%	Other family member	9%	Coach
16%	Friend	18%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
9%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	6%	Some other person

14. What would be the main reason for your child not continuing his/her education after high school?

40%	No reason, child definitely will go	2%	Child wants to join the military
25%	It costs too much or cannot afford it	0%	College is too far from home
1%	College not necessary for planned job	1%	Child doesn't like school
2%	Grades are not good enough	0%	Child wants to start a family
5%	Child is just not interested	2%	Some other reason
0%	Child wants or needs to work	13%	Don't know
9%	Multiple Response		

Knowledge about College

		Yes	*No*
15.	Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses and grades needed to get into college?	8%	92%
16.	Are you familiar with the entrance requirements for the three basic types of postsecondary schools?		
	a. Two-year or community college	33%	67%
	b. Four-year college or university	37%	63%
	c. Vocational, trade, or business school	35%	65%
17.	Have you talked with your child about attending college?	85%	15%
18.	Have you started saving any money for your child's college education?	40%	60%

19. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

0%	Up to $1,000	14%	$15,001 - $20,000
20%	$1,001 - $5,000	8%	$20,001 - $25,000
29%	$5,001 - $10,000	6%	$25,001 - $30,000
19%	$10,001 - $15,000	4%	More than $30,000

20. Do you think your child would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university?

10%	Definitely can't afford it	27%	Probably can afford it
11%	Doubt if can afford it	13%	Definitely will be able to afford it
38%	Not sure		

21. Have you heard of the following sources of money for education beyond high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

58%	Federal Pell grants	36%	Institutional scholarships
76%	Federal student loans	52%	Private or academic scholarships
35%	Federal work-study	70%	Athletic scholarships
59%	State scholarships		

		Yes	*No*
22.	Do you think your child is likely to qualify for enough of the above sources of financial assistance to attend college?	73%	27%

Background

		Male	*Female*
23.	What is your gender?	100%	0%

24. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

12%	Less than high school	6%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
52%	Completed high school	10%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
14%	Certificate (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	5%	Advanced degree (master or doctorate)

		Yes	*No*
25.	Are there any other adults in your household?	92%	8%
26.	Is anyone in your household currently attending college?	14%	86%
27.	Do you use a computer at home?	70%	30%

28. What is the total yearly income of all persons in your household? (Include salaries, interest, retirement, and public assistance for all household members.)

6%	$10,000 or less	18%	$30,001 to $40,000
18%	$10,001 to $20,000	12%	$40,001 to $50,000
22%	$20,001 to $30,000	25%	More than $50,000

29. How do you describe yourself?

1%	American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	96%	White
1%	Black or African American	0%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	1%	Multiracial

30. Which of the following free workshops would you attend if they were offered at a convenient time, with free transportation? *(Select all that apply.)*

38%	Understanding Computers/Internet	27%	Preparing for College - A Parent's Course
20%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Math	28%	Understanding College Requirements
11%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in English	35%	Understanding Financial Aid/Scholarships
10%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Spelling	8%	Preparing to Take the GED
8%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Writing	24%	Understanding the Teenage Years
7%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Speaking	27%	How to Know the Signs of a Troubled Teen

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